and gravel off a busted pie that he'd gone back for, picking out a clean place to bite into it."

The laugh that followed moved him to a mild interest. He nodded. "It was all right for Burke. He had a half-mile of pies to eat back over. But we didn't get a blamed doughnut till we got to the lot and sat into parbroiled rooster in the cook tent. And that was the second month we'd been eating hen meat. I wouldn't 've kicked on that either, but there was no one but me to fondle the elephant.

"I coaxed him up from the train to the lot with a hay fork, and when we were about there he broke away and got into an orchard, instead of steering to the tent where he belonged. I caught him up against a tree and chained him by the hind leg while he was busy tearing off a branch to pick his teeth with, and then I left him there and hunted for the cook tent.

"I picked up a persimmon near the fence. Did any of you fellahs ever chew a green persimmon?"

None of us ever had.

He nodded again, more grimly. "There 're some people need a touch of hard luck to mellow 'em up, and that's the way with the persimmon. It ain't ever right till it's been frost-bit. It looks all right; it's yellow, and it tastes sweet at first; but it draws up the inside of your mouth like the lining of an old boot, and the more water you drink the worse it gets. After the first two chews I took out o' mine, I dropped it and ran for the cook tent so's to get something to eat before the lockjaw'd shut up my main entrance altogether.

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"The chicken was a tight fit. But I was getting it down, all right, longways, in Indian file, when we heard the squealing of a whole menagerie of wild elephants tearing each other limb from limb—and I knew it was that pup Punch. And it was. I'd tied him to a persimmon-tree, and he'd stripped a bar'l of green fruit off the low branches, and chew'd 'em up.

"When I got to him, he was sitting up on his tail, his mouth sucked in like a sloth-bear begging peanuts, and his under lip trembling with whimpers. He was wringing his trunk the way Burke had taught him to ring the dinner-bell in our act when he wanted a drink, and he was about the pitifullest-looking fool of an infant elephant a man ever nursed.

"Of course I got scared, and started the crowd fetching pails of water. And when he'd blowed the first bucket down his orfice, he let out a new sort of cramped whine, and the persimmons gripped his pipes, and he laid over on his fat sides and blubbered and blew bubbles like a kid with the colic.

"Say, that was before I was married. We were all a lot of old bachelors on the job. We didn't know what to do, and Punch wouldn't let us try to learn. As soon as anyone got near him, he whipped out for a belt with his trunk and squalled like he was teething. After he'd missed me by an inch two or three times, I threw a bucket of water on him and went off to get old man Morris.

"And when I got back to him, he was feeling better—a little red in the face and teary round the eyelashes and trembly in the under lip—but better. The persimmons had let up on him, and he was lying back thinking it over. 'He's all right now,' Morris said. 'Leave him here till Burke comes. We don't need him in the p'rade.' So I got him a truss of hay and left him with it.

"But Burke didn't come. Burke didn't come, and the afternoon show did. And it was up to me. 'Oh the elephant's all right,' the old man said. 'He's as mild as milk. I'll send Eyres in with you. Go ahead.' Eyres was a sort of assistant keeper to Burke; but he wasn't anything but a gat-toothed New-England mud-puller that didn't know any more about orphan elephants than I did. I made him up from Burke's trunk and started him off to fetch the brute, and I says to myself: 'That's all right. Punch 'll think it's Burke, and if he has any kick coming he'll take it out on Eyres. That lets me out.' And I put on my grease, just grinning at myself in the glass.

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"When I comes around to the door to take the turn, I finds Punch waiting there with the big ruffle around his neck and the bow on his tail, as meek as Sunday-school. He wasn't saying a word—just reaching out for a tuft of grass here and a bit of paper there, sort of turning things over and smelling around, no end int'rested in nothing at all. He lets on not to notice me when I comes up; but I stands off and keeps an eye on him, and pretty soon I sees Mr. Punch slide a little wicked look around at me; and when he finds me watching him, he gets double busy again, blowing dust over his back and fanning himself with his ears. And I says to myself: 'Here's where I'm going to do Japanese juggling with a stick o' dynamite,' and I moves over on the other side of Eyres.

"Well, that was all right too. Eyres went right ahead as if he had a kitten on a string, and I kept my distance. We paraded into the ring, making faces at the little gaffers on the 'blues,' and we put out the table and the chairs, and started bus'ness. Punch sat himself down and straightened his collar, and Eyres sat himself down and straightened his collar, and Punch knocked off Eyres's hat—the way Burke had taught him—and then Punch rang the dinner-bell, and I come running up with the canvas-pie. And that's where the trouble started.

"I says to myself: 'There's something about this pie 't smells of persimmons—or maybe it's on my hands.' And then when I sees the way Punch looks at it, I thinks: 'Me and persimmons are located together for all time in that beggar's memory, I guess.' He was smelling around it, suspicious, with his pipe-line, grunting and talking to himself. And then he lifted the flap in the crust and put his nose in, and instead of fishing out the apples that ought to've been in there—but weren't in there, because some hungry hobo (and we never found out who it was) had eaten all the pippins and filled the cursed pie with green persimmons—why, Punch out with a snort and grabbed the dinner-bell and began ringing it like a house afire. That was my cue to run up with a bucket of drink, and I run up most almighty slow, and when he saw me coming he put his two big feet down on the table and smashed it flat, and come on over to smash me.

"Say, were you ever chased by a squealing locomotive with a lasso for a cow-catcher? If you ever are, don't try to dodge. I didn't. I made a flying leap from the middle of that ring, and lit on the other side of the tent and dived under the seats and crawled out under the canvas and climbed a tree. And that tent was humming like a sawmill. There was just one continual wild yell on top of one continual smash-crash-grind-and-mash of circus seats, and one unending swarm of Tennessee folks crawling out under the flaps and hunting the horizon.

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"If it'd been a three-ringed show, I'd 'a' stayed longer; but I began to see that Punch wasn't going to take long before he'd sorted over that one-ring collection of strangers and come on my trail again—and the tree I was on wasn't high enough to make me feel easy. So I slid down and began to beat across lots into tall timber. And the first man I met was Wally Burke, coming up from the depot, off a freight. 'What the blazes's up?' he sings out. And when I says 'Punch!' he grabs for me, and I dodged, and caught the caboose of the freight, and went on to the next stop. I didn't want any arguments neither with him nor Punch. When the circus came on next day, they'd both quit and I was out of a job."

He smiled regretfully. "Say, but those were the good old days, all right! This theater bus'ness is good enough for chorus girls and glad-rag artists; but it don't—it don't smell right somehow. Did you ever smell a circus when—Eh?"

The stage carpenter had reached in from the aisle and touched Slivers on the shoulder. "That automobile's in the wings," he said, "if you want to try it now."

Slivers settled his hat with both hands, and stood up. "Good-by, boys," he said. "If y'ever see Burke or any of the old bunch, tell them I died game."

FEAR

By Carolyn Wells

I fear no foe. All man can do I dare;
Where honor calls or duty bids I go;
Mine enemy I meet and fight him fair—
I fear no foe

I fear not failure. Fate defeat may send—
In brave new aims are blighted hopes forgot.
And though repeated unsuccess impend,
It daunts me not.

I fear not Death. Although the despot grim
Attack me with unconquerable might,
Ere I yield up my vanquished self to him
I'll bravely fight.

Yet before one dread thought my spirit quails:
What if my coward soul prove insincere?
And this base fear alone my heart assails:
The fear of Fear.

"THERE AIN'T GOIN' TO BE NO CORE"—By Grace G. Wiederseim